

# TRENDS IN HISTORIOGRAPHY

## MODULE I-EVOLUTION OF HISTORY AS A DISCIPLINE



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# CHURCH HISTORIOGRAPHY



- Church historiography is entirely different from that of the Greeco-Roman period
- Charismatic, Linear, universal and impersonal-characteristics
- History was not cyclical but a continuous flow
- The greatest of the Church historiographers was st. Augustine (A.D 354-430) who was a theologian, philosopher, preacher, teacher, poet and a profound thinker
- His great book 'The City of God' in twenty-two volumes
- The spread of Christianity influenced the thought process of medieval Europe, which resulted in the making of a new historical consciousness and thus the historical writing
- It was not critical or rational but was to strengthen faith in divinity



- St. Augustine, in his work, he argues that the world is ruled by two authorities, the God and the devil which he terms the city of God and the city of Devil or Satan
- To him the struggle between the two would ultimately end in the victory of the city of God
- St. Augustine argues that whatever God has done is beautiful and perfect, while whatever man has done is just imitation and imperfect
- In the political field, man is making experiments after experiments, only to find that no political institution has so far proved correct and satisfactory
- The kingdom of the church is the reflection of the kingdom of heaven
- St. Augustine states that the city of man is based on Physical force without which there will be no law and order, safety and security
- The city of God is based on divine love which kindles a new light in the human heart



- The city of God confers goodness, love, justice and kindness, while the city of man confers power, pride, blood and iron and enmity
- The ultimate purpose of the city of man should be to make man live in essential unity with God and this can be achieved only through the implementation of the principles laid down by the church
- St. Augustine states that the city of God meets also the physical needs of the people
- Will Durant states that the work, 'City of God' put an end to Paganism as a philosophy and paved way for the emergence of Christian Philosophy
- The city of God remained as the fundamental theological formulation and political philosophy of medieval Europe
- The relation between the state and the church was also explained in this work

# MEDIEVAL HISTORIOGRAPHY



- It literally controlled the medieval European Historiography
- Medieval European historiography followed the path of St. Augustine
- The medieval European historiography led by St. Augustine made history universal by which all the events were brought into a single common chronological frame work
- It formulated the dominant political theory of the middle ages which was the declaration that God ruled human affairs and it put God in history
- The city of God pertains to that literature of which Plato's 'Republic', Sir Thomas More's 'Utopia, Bacon's Atlatis and Campanella's City of the Sun are other examples



- It developed a special technique to treat inspired and sacred writings
- Its approach was not objective but subjective
- It was not based on reason but on faith and belief
- It is highly defective in Chronology and gave religious meaning to history
- St. Augustine considered history as a linear movement consisting of 8 stages, 5 of the past, 1 that is present and 2 in the future
- Concept of linear history: Time has a beginning (creation) and progresses in a straight line through God's dealings with man (after creation till their current) and to an end – fulfillment (the second coming of Christ). History has a direction and it is meaningful.